

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for selecting an emphasis image from a collection of images based on facial identification, said method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) obtaining a collection of digital images;
 - (b) detecting image patterns indicative of the presence of one or more faces in the digital images, thereby identifying one or more detected faces for each image in which a face is detected;
 - (c) recognizing one or more faces from the detected faces for each of the images in which a face is detected; and
 - (d) scoring an image based on the relative frequency of occurrence of a recognized face within the collection of images, thereby producing an emphasis image characteristic of the most frequently occurring face in the collection of images.
2. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the scoring step (d) comprises scoring an image based on the number of recognized faces detected in an image and on the number of occurrences within the image collection of the recognized faces within the image.
3. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the collection of digital images are obtained from a digital camera.
4. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the collection of digital images are obtained from scanned film images.
5. The method as claimed in claim 5 further comprising the steps of establishing a first data structure that stores data identifying each face and the images in which that face appears, and a second data structure that stores a list of the images and an entry in the list for the number of the faces that appear in each image.

6. The method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a set of pointers that couple the entries in the second data structure to the data for each face in the first data structure.

7. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the emphasis image is used in the formation of a photo-album.

8. The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein the emphasis image is used as a cover image for the photo-album.

9. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the emphasis image is used as a cover image for a jewel case of a CD.

10. The method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- (e) detecting text in the digital images;
- (f) generating statistics pertaining to the detected text, wherein said statistics represent a likelihood that the text describes the collection of images; and
- (g) scoring the image based on the statistics pertaining to the detected text and the relative frequency of occurrence of a recognized face within the collection of images, thereby producing an emphasis image.

11. The method as claimed in claim 10 wherein the statistics pertaining to the detected text include at least one of an area containing the detected text, a maximum size of the detected text, a count of the words expressed by the detected text, and a count of the keywords expressed by the detected text.

12. A method for selecting an emphasis image from a collection of images based on the usage of text in the image, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) obtaining a collection of digital images;
- (b) detecting text in the digital images;
- (c) generating statistics pertaining to the detected text, wherein said statistics represent a likelihood that the text describes the collection of images; and
- (d) scoring each image based on the statistics pertaining to the detected text, thereby producing an emphasis image containing text likely to represent the collection of images.

13. The method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the statistics pertaining to the detected text include at least one of an area containing the detected text, a maximum size of the detected text, a count of the words expressed by the detected text, and a count of the keywords expressed by the detected text.

14. The method as claimed in claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

- (e) detecting image patterns indicative of the presence of one or more faces in the digital images, thereby identifying one or more detected faces for each image in which a face is detected;
- (f) recognizing one or more faces from the detected faces for each of the images in which a face is detected; and
- (g) scoring an image based on the relative frequency of occurrence of a recognized face within the collection of images as well as the statistics pertaining to the detected text, thereby further producing an emphasis image characteristic of the most frequently occurring face in the collection of images.

15. The method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the collection of digital images are obtained from a digital camera.

16. The method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the collection of digital images are obtained from scanned film images.

17. The method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the emphasis image is used in the formation of a photo-album.

18. The method as claimed in claim 17 wherein the emphasis image is used as a cover image for the photo-album.

19. The method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the emphasis image is used as a cover image for a jewel case of a CD.